

Application No. 10/707,302
Docket No. 133663
Amendment dated January 9, 2006
Reply to Office Action of September 9, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Original): A method for processing a rotor forging, the method comprising the steps of:

casting an ingot to have at least first and second ingot regions axially aligned within the ingot, the first and second ingot regions being formed of different alloys that intermix during casting to define a transition zone between the first and second ingot regions, the transition zone having a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second ingot regions;

forging the ingot to produce a rotor forging containing first and second forging regions and a transition zone therebetween corresponding to the first and second ingot regions and the transition zone of the ingot such that the first and second forging regions are formed of the different alloys and the transition zone of the rotor forging has a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second forging regions, the first and second forging regions and the transition zone therebetween being axially aligned along a geometric

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centerline of the rotor forging;

ascertaining boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging to define a plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the transition zone; and then

using the plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes to produce a three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging.

Claim 2 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the transition zone of the rotor forging is asymmetrical about the geometric centerline of the rotor forging following the forging step.

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

producing a rotor forging specimen in accordance with the casting and forging steps of claim 1, whereby the rotor forging specimen contains first and second specimen regions and a transition zone therebetween, the first and second specimen regions are formed of the different alloys, the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen has a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second specimen regions, and the first and second

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specimen regions and the transition zone therebetween are axially aligned
along a geometric centerline of the rotor forging specimen;

ascertaining boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor
forging specimen to define a plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional
shapes of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen;

using the plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the
transition zone within the rotor forging specimen to produce a three-dimensional
contour ~~approximation~~ of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor
forging specimen; and

using the three-dimensional contour ~~approximation~~ of the shape of
the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen and the boundary points of
the transition zone within the rotor forging to produce the three-dimensional
approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging.

Claim 4 (Original): The method according to claim 3, wherein the
step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor
forging comprises determining at an outside surface of the rotor forging the
level of at least one alloying constituent of at least one of the different alloys of
the first and second specimen regions.

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Claim 5 (Original): The method according to claim 4, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen comprises:

sectioning the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen to define a sectioned surface on the rotor forging specimen; and then performing chemical analysis on the sectioned surface to determine levels of the alloying constituent at multiple locations on the sectioned surface.

Claim 6 (Original): The method according to claim 3, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen comprises:

sectioning the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen to define a sectioned surface on the rotor forging specimen; and then performing chemical analysis at multiple locations on the sectioned surface to determine levels of at least one alloying constituent of at least one of the different alloys of the first and second specimen regions.

Claim 7 (Original): The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of using the three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging to predict centerline deflection of a

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rotor machined from the rotor forging.

Claim 8 (Original): The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of using the three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging to identify an axial line through the rotor forging that is more centrally located with respect to material properties of the rotor forging than the geometric centerline of the rotor forging.

Claim 9 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging comprises ultrasonically examining the rotor forging to produce a noise pattern corresponding to variations in metallurgical characteristics within the rotor forging attributable to changes in chemistry between the transition zone and the first and second rotor regions.

Claim 10 (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein the first rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting of CrMoV low alloy steels, martensitic stainless steels containing about 9 to about 14 weight percent chromium, Fe-Ni alloys, and nickel-base alloys, and the second rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting

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of NiCrMoV low alloy steels and martensitic stainless steels containing about 11 to about 14 weight percent chromium.

Claim 11 (New): The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

using the three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging to establish a geometric centerline of the transition zone within the rotor forging; and then

off-center machining the rotor forging to produce a machined rotor so that the geometric centerline of the transition zone is approximately the geometric centerline of the machined rotor.

Claim 12 (New): A method for processing a rotor forging, the method comprising the steps of:

producing a rotor forging specimen by:

casting an ingot specimen to have at least first and second ingot specimen regions axially aligned within the ingot specimen, the first and second ingot specimen regions being formed of different alloys that intermix during casting to define a transition zone between the first and second ingot specimen regions, the transition zone

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having a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second ingot specimen regions;

forging the ingot specimen to produce a rotor forging specimen containing first and second forging specimen regions and a specimen transition zone therebetween corresponding to the first and second ingot specimen regions and the transition zone of the ingot such that the first and second forging specimen regions are formed of the different alloys and the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen has a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second forging specimen regions, the first and second forging specimen regions and the transition zone therebetween being axially aligned along a geometric centerline of the rotor forging specimen;

ascertaining boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen to define a plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen; and

using the plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen to produce a three-dimensional contour of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen;

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producing a rotor forging in accordance with the casting and forging steps performed to produce the rotor forging specimen, whereby the rotor forging contains first and second regions and a transition zone therebetween, the first and second regions are formed of the different alloys, the transition zone of the rotor forging has a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second regions, and the first and second regions and the transition zone therebetween are axially aligned along a geometric centerline of the rotor forging;

ascertaining boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging to define a plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the transition zone;

using the three-dimensional contour of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen and the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging to produce a three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging.

using the three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone within the rotor forging to establish a geometric centerline of the transition zone within the rotor forging; and then

off-center machining the rotor forging to produce a machined rotor so that the geometric centerline of the transition zone is approximately the

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geometric centerline of the machined rotor.

Claim 13 (New): The method according to claim 12, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging comprises determining at an outside surface of the rotor forging the level of at least one alloying constituent of at least one of the different alloys of the first and second specimen regions.

Claim 14 (New): The method according to claim 13, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen comprises:

sectioning the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen to define a sectioned surface on the rotor forging specimen; and then

performing chemical analysis on the sectioned surface to determine levels of the alloying constituent at multiple locations on the sectioned surface.

Claim 15 (New): The method according to claim 12, wherein the step of ascertaining the boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging specimen comprises:

sectioning the transition zone of the rotor forging specimen to define a

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sectioned surface on the rotor forging specimen; and then
performing chemical analysis at multiple locations on the sectioned
surface to determine levels of at least one alloying constituent of at least one of
the different alloys of the first and second specimen regions.

Claim 16 (New): The method according to claim 12, wherein the first
rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting of CrMoV
low alloy steels, martensitic stainless steels containing about 9 to about 14
weight percent chromium, Fe-Ni alloys, and nickel-base alloys, and the second
rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting of
NiCrMoV low alloy steels and martensitic stainless steels containing about 11 to
about 14 weight percent chromium.

Claim 17 (New): The method according to claim 12, wherein the
transition zone of the rotor forging is asymmetrical about the geometric
centerline of the rotor forging following the step of producing a rotor forging.

Claim 18 (New): A method for processing a rotor forging, the
method comprising the steps of:
casting an ingot to have at least first and second ingot regions axially

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aligned within the ingot, the first and second ingot regions being formed of different alloys that intermix during casting to define a transition zone between the first and second ingot regions, the transition zone having a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second ingot regions;

forging the ingot to produce a rotor forging containing first and second forging regions and a transition zone therebetween corresponding to the first and second ingot regions and the transition zone of the ingot such that the first and second forging regions are formed of the different alloys and the transition zone of the rotor forging has a composition that differs from and varies between the first and second forging regions, the first and second forging regions and the transition zone therebetween being axially aligned along a geometric centerline of the rotor forging;

ascertaining boundary points of the transition zone within the rotor forging to define a plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes of the transition zone by ultrasonically examining the rotor forging to produce a noise pattern corresponding to variations in metallurgical characteristics within the rotor forging attributable to changes in chemistry between the transition zone and the first and second rotor regions;

using the plurality of two-dimensional cross-sectional shapes to produce a three-dimensional approximation of the shape of the transition zone

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within the rotor forging;

using the three-dimensional approximation to establish a geometric centerline of the transition zone within the rotor forging; and then

off-center machining the rotor forging to produce a machined rotor so that the geometric centerline of the transition zone is approximately the geometric centerline of the machined rotor.

Claim 19 (New): The method according to claim 18, wherein the first rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting of CrMoV low alloy steels, martensitic stainless steels containing about 9 to about 14 weight percent chromium, Fe-Ni alloys, and nickel-base alloys, and the second rotor region is formed from an alloy chosen from the group consisting of NiCrMoV low alloy steels and martensitic stainless steels containing about 11 to about 14 weight percent chromium.

Claim 20 (New): The method according to claim 18, wherein the transition zone of the rotor forging is asymmetrical about the geometric centerline of the rotor forging following the forging step.